

## Biology 813: Issues in Bioethics Summer 2013

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### Course Materials:

- Required Texts: *Bioethics and the New Embryology*, by Scott Gilbert, Anna Tyler, and Emily Zackin, ISBN #0-7167-7345-7.
- Announcements, quizzes, test, discussion boards, and position paper: All information for this class will be available on blackboard (<http://bb.unk.edu>).
- E-mail: All students must use their UNK email account so that I can reach them.

**Course Description:** Bioethics is the study of ethical controversies in both biology and medicine. Science has progressed significantly in the last century and with this progress has come ethical questions. The intent of this course is to focus on a variety of issues that have arisen, including, but not limited to, assisted reproductive technologies, sex selection, cloning, and stem cell research to name a few.

### Course Objectives:

1. To gain a broad background in biology and ethics.
2. To be able to make an informed analysis of bioethical issues.
3. To critically discuss bioethical issues in a group setting.

*Students will achieve these objectives through quizzes, chat room discussion, discussion board, and writing a position paper.*

### Expectations:

Grades are based on participation and quality of discussion, weekly quizzes, a final comprehensive exam, and one writing assignment. There are no taped lectures for this course. Students must participate online for all discussion topics. The week runs from the Monday through the Sunday listed in the syllabus.

### Grading Scheme:

	Points	Due Date
Discussion Board (30 posts @ 5 pts each)	150	Bi-weekly
Quizzes (7 @ 20 pts each + 10 pts Intro)	150	Weekly (includes Introductions)
Position Paper1 (1 @ 100 pts each)	100	Monday, June 17 <sup>th</sup> by 8:00 am CST
Comprehensive Final	100	By Friday 7/12 at 8:00 am CST
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>500</b>	

**Grade assignment:** Grades will be assigned using the standard grading scale for the Department of Biology, as follows: A (93-100%), A- (90-92%), B+ (88-89%), B (83-87%), B- (80-82%), C+ (78-79%), C (73-77%), C- (70-72%), D+ (68-69%), D (63-67%), D- (60-62%), and F (below 60%). FYI, I do not round up grades. Therefore, if you have an 82.6%, you have earned a letter grade of a B-, not a B. Also, 1% = 5 points, not 1 point. Grade assignments are final unless there is a calculation error.

**Schedule:** This class is a graduate level class, therefore I assume that all of you have had a Biology course that covered introductory material at some point in your career. Each week we will be discussing the information presented in one chapter of the book. This schedule is subject to change.

Week	Chapter	Quiz
#1 5/20-5/26	Chapter 1: An Outline of Human Development Chapter 2: Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Arguments	Introductions Timed quiz #1 over Chapters #1 & 2
#2 5/27-6/2	Chapter 3: Fertilization and Assisted Reproduction Chapter 4: Safety and Ethical Issues	Timed quiz #2 over Chapter #3 & 4
#3 6/3-6/9	Chapter 5: The Genetics of Sex Determination Chapter 6: Arguments For and Against Sex Selection	Timed quiz #3 over Chapter #5 & 6
#4 6/10-6/16	Chapter 7: The Science of Cloning Chapter 8: Ethics and Policies for Human Cloning	Timed quiz #4 over Chapter #7 & 8
#5 6/17-6/23	Chapter 9: Regenerating Deficient Organs through Stem Cells Chapter 10: Ethical Dilemmas in Stem Cell Therapy Position Paper over "When does life begin" due (6/17 at 8:00 am CST)	Timed quiz #5 over Chapter #9 & 10 <b>Position Paper due</b>
#6 6/24-6/30	Chapter 11: Gene Therapy Chapter 12: Should We Allow The Genetic Engineering of Humans?	Timed quiz #6 over Chapter #11 & 12
#7 7/1-7/7	Chapter 13: What is "Normal"? Chapter 14: Genetic Essentialism	Timed quiz #7 over Chapter #13 & 14
#8 7/8-7/12	Chapter 15: The Ethics of Animal Use in Research <b>FINALS WEEK!</b> Wrap up discussion. Class will officially end at 8:00 am Thursday, May 6 <sup>th</sup> . The comprehensive test will be removed at this time.	<b>Timed on-line comprehensive test over all chapters</b>

**Discussion Board:** You are posting as part of a **discussion**, not just for points. You need to post during the week and weekend. You will be graded not on the number of posts per week (two is the minimum to get a score of any type for **each** question), but on the **quality** of posts. **At least one post per question** must have a peer-reviewed **science (not ethics or bioethics)** reference attached to it. Your other post can have a Bioethics or ethics reference if you wish. This is a good practice in having an **informed** opinion. The score for your posts will be based upon critical thinking (a post rich in content and full of insight), connection with issue and real-life situations, uniqueness (new ideas and new connections), depth and detail of posts, respect for classmates, and **discussion with classmates** (if you wait until Saturday and Sunday and are discussing with yourself or one other person, you get 0 points). As you can tell, I do not want people simply agreeing with each other or posting for points. You should be prepared to discuss the questions! The week runs from the Monday through the Sunday listed in the syllabus.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the semester, you will be given 7 timed quizzes worth 20 points each. In addition, the first week introductions will be counted as an additional 10 point quiz score (5 pts for posting and 5 points for picture). The quizzes will cover the book material. You will be allotted 10 minutes to answer 10 multiple choice or true/false questions. The questions will

be given one at a time. You will have only one chance to answer the question and will not be allowed to go back and change answers. Therefore, make sure to answer carefully. If you run out of time while taking the quiz, you will not be given extra time. If you have a problem while taking your quiz, send me an email and I will deal with it as soon as possible. The computer displays a message that tells me what kind of problem you had, whether you took too much time or there was a computer problem. Everyone is expected to take all of the quizzes. The dates for the quizzes are listed on the schedule and will be made available at 8:00 am CST on Monday. You have until 5:00 pm CST on Sunday of the week listed to take the quiz. For example, the first quiz will be put on blackboard at 8:00 am CST on Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup> and you have until 5:00 pm CST Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup> to take the quiz. **THE DEADLINE IS FINAL!** The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that you are keeping up with the course material.

**Position Paper:** Students will have one formal writing assignment, which is a position paper on "When does life begin". Specific details on this writing assignment will be provided for you. The report is due on the date listed on the next page and should be submitted to Blackboard using the "Position Paper" link under "Assignments". **The day and time the final report is due is not negotiable.** For every day the report is late, your grade will be dropped one letter grade. FYI, late day grading starts at 8:01 am on the date due (i.e., as of this time, your paper is already a day late, even though it is only one minute late). Yes, you can hand these in early. The Safe Assignment tool will be set up so that you can plagiarism check your paper before handing it in. **You must do this writing assignment to receive full credit or you automatically fail the course and receive a letter grade of an "F".**

**Final Exam:** There is only one exam given and it is a comprehensive exam over the entire semester. The material on the exam will cover the book material. The exam will be composed of multiple choice or true/false questions and is taken on-line. You will be given 90 minutes to answer 50 questions. Everyone is expected to take the exam. It must be taken by Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of July by 8:00 am CST for credit. Do not try to take it the night before and expect to get additional time. **You must take the exam to receive full credit. If you miss the exam, you will automatically fail and receive a letter grade of an "F".**

**Policy on incomplete:** To be considered for an incomplete in Biology 813:

1. You must submit the reasons you cannot complete the scheduled work. This must include a copy of your class schedule and description of your responsibilities outside the classroom. This should be done in writing and include confirmation from your doctor or employer when appropriate.
2. You must specify the assignments you have missed and a schedule of plans to complete them.
3. You must submit a copy of the above information to the Chair of the Department of Biology and the Dean of Natural and Social Sciences.
4. Upon completion of items 1-3, your request for an incomplete will be considered.

***I expect all students to progress through the requirements for Biology 813 in a timely fashion. Unless your circumstance is remarkable, do not consider an incomplete.***

**Bonus Points or Extra Credit:** I do not give Bonus Points or Extra Credit to Graduate Students, please don't ask.

**Special needs and accommodations:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to students with documented disabilities. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with UNK Disabilities Services Coordinator, David Brandt, in the Academic Success Office, 163 Memorial Student Affairs Building, 308-865-8214 or by email: [brandtdl@unk.edu](mailto:brandtdl@unk.edu).

**Plagiarism and cheating:** Neither will be tolerated! Anyone caught plagiarizing any exercise or cheating on any exercise will receive a 0 for that exercise; subsequent violations will result in referral to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for dismissal from the university.